

# laughing horse

D. H. Lawrence Number

Willard Johnson

Editor

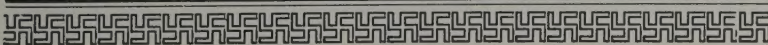


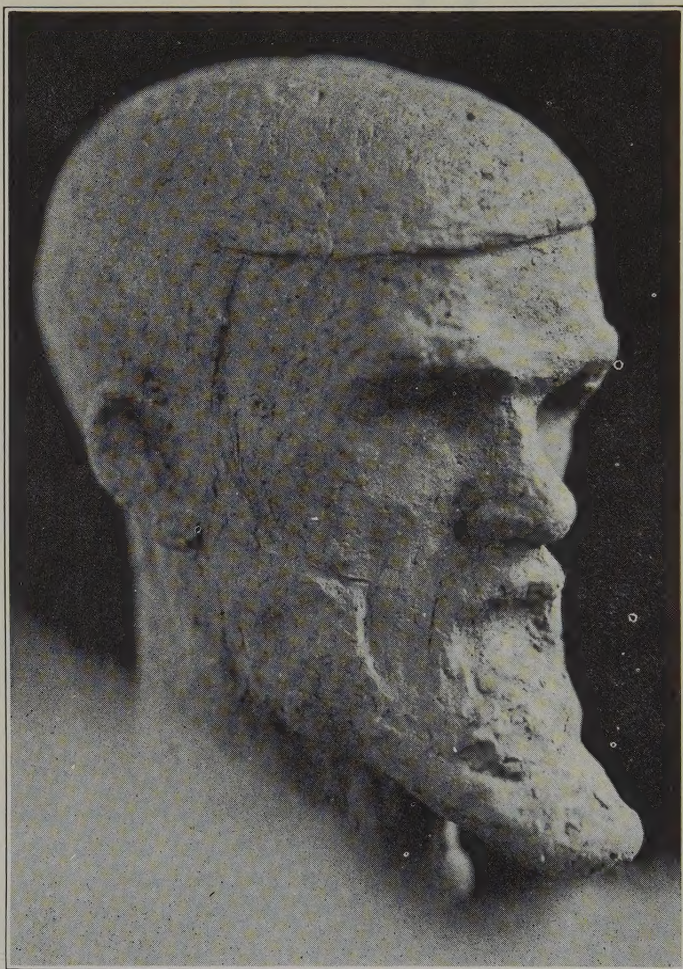
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*D. H. Lawrence (clay)*

*by Ida Rauh*



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# A Little Moonshine With Lemon

By D. H. Lawrence

"Ye Gods, he doth bestride the narrow world  
Like a Colossus . . . !"



HERE is a bright moon, so that even the vines make a shadow, and the Mediterranean has a broad white shimmer between its dimness. By the shore, the lights of the old houses twinkle quietly, and out of the wall of the headland advances the glare of a locomotive's lamps. It is a feast day, St. Catherine's day, and the men are all sitting round the little tables, down below, drinking wine or vermouth.

And what about the ranch, the little ranch in New Mexico? The time is different there: but I too have drunk my glass to St. Catherine, so I can't be bothered to reckon. I consider that there, too, the moon is in the southeast, standing, as it were, over Santa Fe, beyond the bend of those mountains of Picoris.

*Sono io!* say the Italians. I am I! Which sounds simpler than it is.

Because which I am I, after all, now that I have drunk a glass also to St. Catherine, and the moon shines over the sea, and my thoughts, just because they are fleetingly occupied by the moon on the Mediterranean, and ringing with the last farewell: *Dunque, Signore! di nuovo!*—must needs follow the moon-track south-west, to the great South-west, where the ranch is.

They say: *in vino veritas*. Bah! They say so much! But in the wine of St. Catherine, my little ranch, and the three horses down among the timber. Or if it has snowed, the horses are gone away, and it is snow, and the moon shines on the alfalfa slope, between the pines, and the cabins are blind. There is nobody there. Everything shut up. Only the big pine-tree in front of the house, standing still and unconcerned, alive.

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Perhaps when I have a *Weh* at all, my Heimweh is for the tree in front of the house, the overshadowing tree whose green top one never looks at. But on the trunk one hangs the various odds and ends of iron things. It is so near. One goes out of the door, and the tree-trunk is there, like a guardian angel.

The tree-trunk, and the long work table, and the fence! Then beyond, since it is night, and the moon shines, for me at least, away beyond is a light, at Taos, or at Ranchos de Taos. Here, the castle of Noli is on the western sky-line. But there, no doubt it has snowed, since even here the wind is cold. There it has snowed, and the nearly-full moon blazes wolf-life, as here it never blazes; risen like a were-wolf over the mountains. So there is a faint hoar shagginess of pine-trees, away at the foot of the alfalfa field, and a grey gleam of snow in the night, on the level desert, and a ruddy point of human light, in Ranchos de Taos.

And beyond, you see them even if you don't see them, the circling mountains, since there is a moon.

So, one hurries indoors, and throws more logs on the fire.

One doesn't either. One hears Giovanni calling from below, to say Goodnight! He is going down to the village for a spell. *Vado giu Signor Lorenzo! Buona notte!*

And the Mediterranean whispers in the distance, a sound like in a shell. And save that somebody is whistling, the night is very bright and still. The Mediterranean, so eternally young, the very symbol of youth! And Italy, so reputedly old, yet forever so childlike and naive! Never, never for a moment able to comprehend the wonderful, hoary age of America, the continent of the afterwards.

I wonder if I am here, or if I am just going to bed at the ranch. Perhaps looking in Montgomery Ward's catalogue for something for Christmas, and drinking moonshine and hot water, since it is cold. Go out and look if the chickens are shut up warm: if the horses are in sight: if Susan, the black cow, has gone to her nest among the trees, for the night. Cows don't eat much at night. But Susan will wander in the moon. The moon makes her uneasy. And the horses stamp around the cabins.



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In a cold like this, the stars snap like distant coyotes, beyond the moon. And you'll see the shadow of actual coyotes, going across the alfalfa field. And the pine-trees make little noises, sudden and stealthy, as if they were walking about. And the place heaves with ghosts. That place, the ranch, heaves with ghosts. But when one has got used to one's own home-ghosts, be they never so many, and so potent, they are like one's own family, but nearer than the blood. It is the ghosts one misses most, the ghosts there, of the Rocky Mountains, that never go beyond the timber and that linger, like the animals, round the water-spring. I know them, they know me: we go well together. But they reproach me for going away. They are resentful too.

Perhaps the snow is in tufts on the greasewood bushes. Perhaps the blue jays fall in a blue, metallic cloud out of the pine trees in front of the house, at dawn, in the terrific cold, when the dangerous light comes watchful over the mountains, and touches the desert far-off, far-off, beyond the Rio Grande.

And I, I give it up. There is a choice of vermouth, Marsala, red wine or white. At the ranch, tonight, because it is cold, I should have moonshine, not very good moonshine, but still warming: with hot water and lemon, and sugar, and a bit of cinnamon from one of those little red Schilling's tins. And I should light my little stove in the bedroom, and let it roar a bit, sucking the wind. Then dart to bed, with all the ghosts of the ranch cosily round me, and sleep till the very coldness of my emerged nose wakes me. Waking, I shall look at once through the glass panels of the bedroom door, and see the trunk of the great pine tree, like a person on guard, and a low star just coming over the mountain, very brilliant, like someone swinging an electric lantern.

*Si vedra la primavera*

*Fiorann' le mandorline—*

Ah, well, let it be vermouth, since there's no moonshine with lemon and cinnamon. Supposing I called Giovanni, and told him I wanted

*"Un poco di chiar' di luna, con cannella e limone . . . ."*

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## Mediterranean In January

*By D. H. Lawrence*

The blue anemone with a dark core  
That has flowered before  
Shows one bud more!

Far-off, far-off, in the hyacinth ages  
It flowered, before men took to flowering for wages;  
Flowers now, as we're crossing the dreary stages.

Today, when the sun is computed old  
And Europe's tail-spin rolls still unrolled;  
And bank-tellers tell the one tale that is told;  
And bank-notes are poetry purer than gold;  
When the end of the world we are told, is scrolled;  
And a man, when he isn't bought, feels sold:

Out of the winter's silky fur  
Buds a blue anemone, still bluer.

Nations beside the sea are old,  
Folk-flowers have faded, men have grown cold.  
Nothing remains now but mould unto mould,—  
Ichabod! Ichabod! lo and behold!

Oh age! that is hoar as anemone buds!  
Oh chew, old cows, at your ancient cuds!  
Chew also, young heifers, your juicier cuds!

The wisdom of ages droops! It is folly  
To laugh when we're feeling melancholy!  
Tears wrinkle our faces, like rain in the holly.  
The wisdom of ages droops! Ain't it jolly!

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The sea has its bud-lips smilingly curled,  
What! Yet another bad end of the world!  
Why, 'twas only yesterday every man twirled  
His moustache with an elbow lifted, and hurled  
Braggadaccios around the blue rims of the world!

Now the world is ending in dust and in sorrow.  
The world is ending; let's hurry to borrow  
Black for the funeral! Wow! waly! and worrow!

The age is a joke! and surely, tomorrow  
We'll see the joke, and how funny is sorrow!

Yesterday, yes! is a tale that is told.  
Tomorrow comes stealthily out of the mould  
Like a bud from winter disguised in grey,  
Hidden blue with the blueness of one more day.

When I see this sea looking shoddy and dead,  
And this sun cease shining overhead,  
And no more anemones rise from the dead,  
And never another *per Bacco!* is said:  
I shall come to New York, and live on Manhattan,  
And deep in Central Park I'll fatten  
My griefs, and on New York newspapers batten.

Till then, I like better this sea, I must say,  
Which is blue with the blueness of one more day.  
The which, since it coincides with my day  
And will shine if I stay or I go away  
Persuades me to stay, since stay I may . . .



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# Europe Versus America

By D. H. Lawrence

A young American said to me: "I am not very keen on Europe, but should like to see it, and have done with it." He is an ass. How can one "see" Europe and have done with it. One might as well say: I want to see the moon next week and have done with it. If one doesn't want to see the moon, he doesn't look. And if he doesn't want to see Europe, he doesn't look either. But neither of 'em will go away because he's not looking.

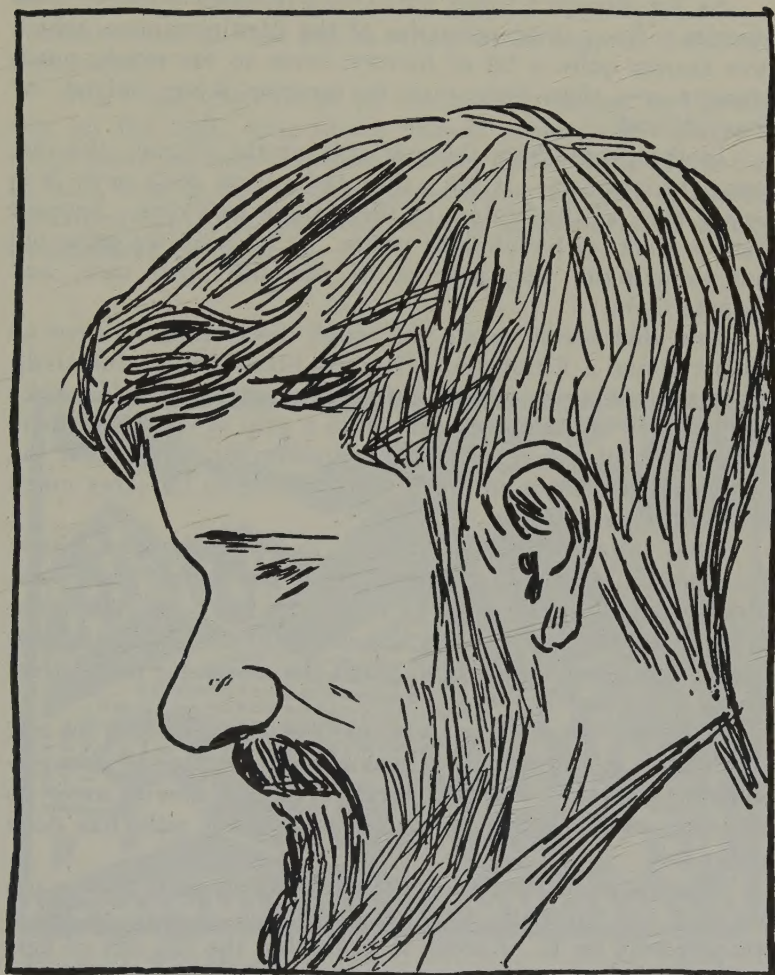
There's no "having done with it." Europe is here, and will be here, long after he has added a bit of dust to America. To me, I simply don't see the point of that American trick of saying one is "through with a thing," when the thing is a good deal bigger than oneself.

I can hear that young man saying: "Oh, I'm through with the moon, she's played out. She's a dead old planet anyhow, and was never more than a side issue." So was Eve, only a side issue. But when a man is through with her, he's through with most of his life.

It's the same with Europe. One may be sick of certain aspects of European civilisation. But they're in ourselves, rather than in Europe. As a matter of fact, coming back to Europe, I realise how much more *tense* the European civilisation is, in the Americans, than in the Europeans. The Europeans still have a vague idea that the universe is greater than they are, and isn't going to change very radically, not for all the telling of all men put together. But the Americans are tense, somewhere inside themselves, as if they felt that once they slackened, the world would really collapse. It wouldn't. If the American tension snapped tomorrow, only that bit of the world which is tense and American would come to an end. Nothing more.

How could I say: I am through with America? America is a great continent; it won't suddenly cease to be. Some part of me will always be conscious of America. But probably





*D. H. Lawrence (pen and ink)*

*by Walter Bynner*

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some part greater still in me will always be conscious of Europe, since I am a European.

As for Europe's being old, I find it much younger than America. Even these countries of the Mediterranean, which have known quite a bit of history, seem to me much, much younger even than Taos, not to mention Long Island, or Coney Island.

In the people here there is still, at the bottom, the old, young insouciance. It isn't that the young *don't care*: it is merely that, at the bottom of them there *isn't* care. Instead there is a sort of bubbling-in of life. It isn't till we grow old that we grip the very sources of our life with care, and strangle them.

And that seems to me the rough distinction between an American and a European. They are both of the same civilization, and all that. But the American grips himself, at the very sources of his consciousness, in a grip of care: and then, to so much of the rest of life, is indifferent. Whereas, the European hasn't got so much care in him, so he cares much more for life and living.

That phrase again of wanting to see Europe and have done with it, shows that strangle-hold so many Americans have got on themselves. Why don't they say: I'd like to see Europe, and then, if it means something to me, good! and if it doesn't mean much to me, so much the worse for both of us. *Vogue la galere!*

I've been a fool myself, saying: Europe is finished for me. —It wasn't Europe at all, it was myself, keeping a strangle-hold on myself. And that strangle-hold I carried over to America; as many a man, and woman worse still, has done before me.

Now, back in Europe, I feel a real relief. The past is too big, and too intimate, for one generation of men to get a strangle-hold on it. Europe is squeezing the life out of herself, with her mental education and her fixed ideas. But she hasn't got her hands round her own throat not half so far as America has hers; here the grip is already falling slack; and if the system collapses, it'll only be another system collapsed, of



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which there have been plenty. But in America, where men grip themselves so much more intensely and suicidally—the women worse—the system has its hold on the very sources of consciousness, so God knows what would happen, if the system broke.

No, it's a relief to be by the Mediterranean, and gradually let the tight coils inside oneself come slack. There is much more life in a deep insouciance, which really is the clue to faith, than in this frenzied, keyed-up care, which is characteristic of our civilization, but which is at its worst, or at least its intensest, in America.



*Ranchos de Taos (linoleum)*

*by Loren Mozley*

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## Beyond the Rockies

*By D. H. Lawrence*

There are people there, beyond the Rockies  
As there are people here, on this side.

But the people there, beyond the Rockies  
Seem always to be asking, asking something.

The new moon sets at sundown,  
And there, beyond the sunset, quivers.

An Indian, walking wrapt in his winding sheet  
Answers the question as he puts it, in his stride.

Mexicans, like people who have died  
Ask, in the space of their eyes:  
What have we lost?

What have we lost, in the west?  
We who have gone west?  
There is no answer.

In the land of the lost  
Nothing but to make lost music.

On the rim of the desert  
Round the lost man's camp fire  
Watch the new moon  
Curved, cut the last threads.

It is finished: the rest is afterwards  
With grey on the floor of the desert,  
And more space than in life.



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## Paris Letter

*By D. H. Lawrence*

I promised to write a letter to you from Paris. Probably I should have forgotten, but I saw a little picture—or sculpture—in the Tuileries, of Hercules slaying the Centaur, and that reminded me. I had so much rather the Centaur had slain Hercules, and men had never developed souls. Seems to me they're the greatest ailment humanity ever had. However, they've got it.

Paris is still monumental and handsome. Along the river where its splendours are, there's no denying its man-made beauty. The poor, pale little Seine runs rapidly north to the sea, the sky is pale, pale jade overhead, greenish and Parisian, the trees of black wire stand in rows, and flourish their black wire brushes against a low sky of jade-pale cobwebs, and the huge dark-grey palaces rear up their masses of stone and slope off towards the sky still with a massive, satisfying suggestion of pyramids. There is something noble and man-made about it all.

My wife says she wishes that grandeur still squared its shoulders on the earth. She wishes she could sit sumptuously in the river windows of the Tuileries, and see a royal spouse—who wouldn't be me—cross the bridge at the head of a tossing, silk and silver cavalcade. She wishes she had a bevy of ladies-in-waiting around her, as a peacock has its tail, as she crossed the weary expanses of pavement in the Champs Elysses.

Well, she can have it. At least, she can't. The world has lost its faculty for splendour, and Paris is like an old, weary peacock that sports a bunch of dirty twigs at its rump, where it used to have a tail. Democracy has collapsed into more and more democracy, and men, particularly Frenchmen, have collapsed into little, rather insignificant, rather wistful, rather nice and helplessly commonplace little fellows who rouse one's mother-instinct and make one feel they should be tucked away in bed and left to sleep, like Rip Van Winkle, till the rest of the storms rolled by.

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It's a queer thing to sit in the Tuileries on a Sunday afternoon and watch the crowd drag through the galleries. Instead of a gay and wicked court, the weary, weary crowd, that looks as if it had nothing at heart to keep it going. As if the human creature had been dwindling and dwindling through the processes of democracy, amid the ponderous ridicule of the aristocratic setting, till soon he will dwindle right away.

Oh, those galleries. Oh, those pictures and those statues of nude, nude women: nude, nude, insistently and hopelessly nude. At last the eyes fall in absolute weariness, the moment they catch sight of a bit of pink-and-white painting, or a pair of white marble fesses. It becomes an inquisition; like being *forced* to go on eating pink marzipan icing. And yet there is a fat and very undistinguished bourgeois with a little beard and a fat and hopelessly petit bourgeoisie wife and awful little girl, standing in front of a huge heap of twisting marble, while he, with a goose-grease unctuous simper, strokes the marble hip of the huge marble female, and points out its niceness *to his wife*. She is not in the least jealous. She knows, no doubt, that her own hip and the marble hip are the only ones he will stroke without paying various prices, one of which, and the last he could pay, would be the price of the spunk.

It seems to me the French are just worn out. And not nearly so much with the late great war as with the pink nudities of women. The men are just worn out, making offerings on the shrine of Aphrodite in elastic garters. And the women are worn out, keeping the men up to it. The rest is all nervous exasperation.

And the table. One shouldn't forget that other, four-legged mistress of man, more unwitherable than Cleopatra. The table. The good kindly tables of Paris, with Coquilles Saint Martin, and escargots and oysters and Chateaubriands and the good red wine. If they can afford it, the men sit and eat themselves pink. And no wonder. But the Aphrodite in a hard black hat opposite, when she has eaten herself also pink, is going to insist on further delights, to which somebody has got to play up. Weariness, isn't the word for it.



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May the Lord deliver us from our own enjoyments, we gasp at last. —And he won't. We actually have to deliver ourselves.

One goes out again from the restaurant comfortably fed and soothed with food and drink, to find the pale-jade sky of Paris crumbling in a wet dust of rain; motor-cars skidding till they turn clean around, and are facing south when they were going north: a boy on a bicycle coming smack, and picking himself up with his bicycle pump between his legs: and the men still fishing, as if it were a Sisyphus penalty, with long sticks fishing for invisible fishes in the Seine: and the huge buildings of the Louvre and the Tuileries standing ponderously, with their Parisian suggestion of pyramids.

And no, in the old style of grandeur I never want to be grand. That sort of regality, that builds itself up in piles of stone and masonry, and prides itself on living inside the monstrous heaps, once they're built is not for me. My wife asks why she can't live in the Petit Palais, while she's in Paris. Well, even if she might, she'd live alone.

I don't believe any more in democracy. But I can't believe in the old sort of aristocracy, either, nor can I wish it back, splendid as it was. What I believe in is the old Homeric aristocracy, when the grandeur was inside the man, and he lived in a simple wooden house. Then, the men that were grand inside themselves, like Ulysses, were the chieftains and the aristocrats by instinct and by choice. At least we'll hope so. And the Red Indians only knew the aristocrat by instinct. The leader was leader in his own being, not because he was somebody's son or had so much money.

It's got to be so again. They say it won't work. I say, why not? If men could once recognize the natural aristocrat when they set eyes on him, they can still. They can still choose him if they would.

But this business of dynasties is a weariness. House of Valois, House of Tudor! Who would want to be a House, or a bit of a House! Let a man be a man, and damn the House business. I'm absolutely a democrat as far as that goes.

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But that men are all brothers and all equal is a greater lie than the other. Some men are always aristocrats. But it doesn't go by birth. A always contains B, but B is not contained in C.

Democracy, however, says that there is no such thing as an aristocrat. All men have two legs and one nose, ergo, they are all alike. Nosily and leggily, maybe. But otherwise, very different.

Democracy says that B is not contained in C, and neither is it contained in A. B, that is, the aristocrat, does not exist.

Now this is palpably a greater lie than the old dynastic lie. Aristocracy truly does not go by birth. But it still goes. And the tradition of aristocracy will help it a lot.

The aristocrats tried to fortify themselves inside these palaces and these splendours. Regal Paris built up the external evidences of her regality. But the two-limbed man inside these vast shells died, poor worm, of over-encumbrance.

The natural aristocrat has got to fortify himself inside his own will, according to his own strength. The moment he builds himself external evidences, like palaces, he builds himself in, and commits his own doom. The moment he depends on his jewels, he has lost his virtue.

It always seems to me that the next civilization won't want to raise these ponderous, massive, deadly buildings that refuse to crumble away with their epoch and weigh men helplessly down. Neither palaces nor cathedrals nor any other hugenesses. Material simplicity is after all the highest sign of civilization. Here in Paris one knows it finally. The ponderous and depressing museum that is regal Paris. And living humanity like poor worms struggling inside the shell of history, all of them inside the museum. The dead life and the living life, all one museum.

Monuments, museums, permanencies and ponderosities are all anathema. But brave men are forever born, and nothing else is worth having.





*Pueblo Indian Dancers (drawing)*

*by D. H. Lawrence*

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## The Bite of Mr. Lawrence

*By Frederic W. Leighton*

Some wit has remarked that Mexican politics is like an onion. It consists of innumerable layers each purporting to be the true body; yet always revealing when peeled another layer more plausible than the one discarded. At length, ripping the ultimate garment, one reaches the heart of the matter to discover—nothing, absolutely nothing. With its last peeling went the onion.

I have wondered if the case of authors is not similar. Critics are forever delving in the archaeological backyards of their prey searching letters, published works, table talk, and reminiscences of childhood friends for clues to the inner spirit, the soul, the *raison d'être*, that when dusted and given a proper museum mounting will show the world what after all was the heart and germ of the literary personage under consideration.

Possibly the critics are correct and authors, even malodorous ones, have hearts and cannot be compared to Mexican politics or onions. Nevertheless for me the comparison holds, so that what I say about Mr. D. H. Lawrence must be understood as a description of one or more of his layers and an attempt to convey the bit of the fumes which lurked amid peelings that I saw.

I met Mr. Lawrence in the City of Mexico and saw him later at the place he has called Sayula, by the shore of the lake of that name high in the mountains that guard the Mexican plateau. Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence were living in a comfortable villa whose inner portales opened upon a small patio graced with rose shrubs and a well. Mr. Lawrence was engaged upon the novel which has just been published. His spare time was spent in walks to Indian villages clustered along the lake shore, in voyages upon the lake in quaint square-sailed vessels that haul grain and wood across its surface, and in conversation with his American companions.

That was a play of personalities—Lawrence and his wife, "Owen" and "Villiers" (to use the names, again, of *The*

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*Plumed Serpent*.) Have you ever watched a cat playing with a mouse—the cat poised, alert, motionless except for rapier paw thrusts, sadistically contemplating its prey; the mouse distracted, alert, alternately crouching in playful study and dashing in desperation to escape its tormentor, inwardly wailing at the thought of its comfortable refuge between the walls—so near at hand, so impossible to reach? If you will picture that scene and then visualize Lawrence contemplating Owen and Owen eyeing Lawrence, each inwardly feeling himself the cat and outwardly posing as the mouse; if you will imagine also Owen in a mouse mood feeling a vicarious concern for Mrs. Lawrence as a fellow mouse and Lawrence in a mouse mood feeling a similar pity for Villiers, you will recreate in your mind's eye what fell to my physical eye when I came to Sayula. The others can and possibly will sometimes, tell the more intimate details of this drama; for Lawrence and Owen both wrote about the mice they studied and Villiers took down their thoughts . . .

I saw only the outside—Lawrence caustic, opinionated and penetrating; Mrs. Lawrence smiling, patient, enthusiastic as a morning glory in the sun; Owen hearty, good natured, analytical; Villiers retentive, absorbing, quietly humorous. Truly a quartet of dramatic tensions!

That is what I saw there in Sayula; that is the setting of locality and personality which attended the birth and swaddling days of Mr. Lawrence's new novel.

What about Lawrence himself? What were the layers of him revealed to my gaze? They were numerous. Here I shall mention only one—the doctrine of cosmic superiority. In several talks we had he advanced the thesis that most men are burros fit only to be ridden and booted. Sprinkled among the cretin mass, as colored grains in an ear of yellow corn, was a select fraternity of ruling spirits. These spirits, though inhabiting bodies not different from those encasing the rest of mankind, were of a different genera. In virtue of their greater intellect and spirit power they were destined to rule the world. Sometimes circumstances conspired to hold them down. There followed in the immediate vicinity of their mundane existence



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a bending and a straining, an upheaval worthy of a Prometheus Bound, or an Etna in eruption. So out of bondage they writhed to freedom, that freedom which is the assertion of the will to power, the exercise of the intrinsic prerogatives of the superior fraternity. Now Lawrence was not precise or categorical in the elaboration of these ideas. He was loquaciously vague. But I gathered that his afflatus had whispered continually in his ear that he was of the superior caste, that the exigencies of adverse circumstances were but temporary and ephemeral, that the Laurentian spirit was bound to rise and sure to rule.

To me this doctrine explains at once the radicalism and the conservatism of D. H. Lawrence. Against the restrictions and hindrances imposed by vested interests (economic, moral, social, and literary) upon the unknown common man who has ability and aspires, Lawrence kicked and kicked hard. Therefore the iconoclast, the radical. Having booted his way with swift strokes of truth to eminence of notoriety and fame, Lawrence asserted the rights of the esoteric ones who command by cosmic patent. Hence we have Lawrence, the Imperial Englishman, who can say with canker, "Few Englishmen read my books; but I will say that those who do are capable of understanding them." Here the doctrine of the superiority of the cosmic elect becomes in practise somewhat confused with the philosophy of the *civis Romanum*. That confusion exists, I believe, in Mr. Lawrence. Anyhow he thoroughly enjoys his capacity for scorn.

This is a peeling of Lorenzo, fascinating and repelling. In the alternations of fascination and repulsion there lies energy. And energy—well, good, and sufficient.



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# Black Magic

*By Idella Purnell*

It must be a joyous pastime to smash traditions—more joyous to smash them with black magic, insidiously, relentlessly, in a subtle, hidden silence. It is easy to seize the mallet of life, and to swing it like a bludgeon in airy circles about one's head, to bring it crashing down on ancient things, powdering them into stars. It is not so easy to steal into the ancient things, into the obvious ancient things, to fill them with one's own identity, one's lusts, dreads, hatreds,—and so to change them, by the secret dark way, into new meanings, new essences, terrible meanings, terrible essences, looming with undecipherable challenge into a startled world. The world does not like it. It makes the world too uncomfortable. When a more conventional artist breaks traditions, the world claps its hands in a naive, childish pleasure, and shouts, "Oh, see the pretty stars!" It does not remark that as the powder of stars settles and falls into shape, it almost invariably resumes its old shape, its old form, its old meaning, and nothing has happened, after all.

But when black magic has changed the inside of an ancient thing—then something has really happened. The antiquities of tradition and custom may keep their forms, may preserve their appearance—but if their insides are chemicalized into something new—then something has happened.

Something has happened.

A poet has subtly, insidiously identified himself and the world with ancient and eternal fruits, flowers, and beasts—giving his meaning to their meaning, changing their meaning, enriching their meaning, and then, disdainfully subtracting himself from their sum, he hands us the old forms with a detached air, leaving us to discover that all the essential meanings we have always held so familiar, we have always taken for granted, have disappeared. Perhaps because they were not essential, after all! Here is a New Mexican landscape, suddenly revealed to us a golden, glittering, museum of the

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dead, with furs of otters, lynxes, jaguars, spread out as far as one may see, and astride over the reader, the golden hawk of Horus. Here is an ass, teaching philosophy. Here is a fig, proving the decadence of the world, mocking the whores of all the Babylons of the world. Here is a peach, a flippant essay on art and realism. A little blackberry faced dog proves the superiority of aristocracy over democracy. The "ruffled black blossom" of a turkey-cock appears symbolizing America, the metallic bird of a new dawn,—the bird that must go through the fires once more, to be smelted pure of the slag.

Logicians will not like these poems.\* It is too easy, they say, to make symbols, to make the symbols stand for generalizations that are probably wrong. We must free ourselves from symbols, from generalizing, from identifying objects with objects, and then conjecturing that the truth about one is the truth about the other. But read these poems carefully, thoughtfully,—do not think them with your cold, conscious, logical mind, free them with your savage, primitive, intuitive being. For these are poems written from the center of being—the center of being that has identified itself with the center of the object written about, and so is able to discover the secrets that have lain concealed in the object, concealed only because we have looked too long and too hard, and have not troubled to stop looking and to feel with our innermost selves.

This is not objective poetry, in spite of its being about birds, beasts, and flowers. The truest subjectivity is that which closes its eyes to look at things. It does not close its eyes only to shut things out. Mr. Lawrence has closed his eyes to look at these objects, and so has seen them in the ancient dark and the ancient light within himself. He has discovered their eternal meanings, cutting through the little, gay, false, superficial meanings that man has pretended about them for so long that he has forgotten what they truly are. And discovery is creation. Only old meanings, old true meanings, can ever become the new true meanings of a world.

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\**Birds, Beasts, and Flowers: Poems*, by D. H. Lawrence. (Seltzer.)



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I do not make the claim that these poems are always true. It is just as right to say that only old, false meanings can become new false meanings . . . except that the eternal errors are not found as deep and as hidden as the eternal truths. Occasionally we see the loyal British subject that Mr. Lawrence is in his conscious self obscuring, overlaying the truths that his inner caveman, superman, Man self has discovered. Mr. Lawrence himself will deny this. But who may ever escape completely from his false and curious self, the mask that heredity and environment have given him to wear? No poet, no god, may ever hope to escape completely from his false outer self, the individual consciousness, into the complete truth of his unchangeable Self. No, Mr. Lawrence, much as we like your book, much as we may admire the true releasing artistry with which you have examined meanings—we cannot always agree with you. We laugh at the humour, the rich, delicious Mother Gooseliness, of your "Hark, hark, the dogs do bark, it's the socialists in the town." We must quarrel with you when you assert your superiority, when you proclaim that a hibiscus is more than a man, merely because in your conscious, conservative British mind you think that man mistaken. We know your retort—that it is our conscious, false, swaggering, American democratic mind that disagrees with you, that in our own inner truth and consciousness we agree with you! Well, it is easy to retort—one must retort, to preserve his own integrity—but still we shall assert that underneath all the top feelings about politics and men, one who goes truly to the depths of feeling will find that a hibiscus is not worth as much as even a socialist. And—you laugh at the socialists' swagger,—but you lay yourself open by your laughter, and there will be democrats and socialists to laugh at your swagger,—the swagger by which you prove that you could identify yourself with socialists, even, if you only would want to . . . for underneath your separate swaggers, you, aristocrat, and they, democrats, socialists, are men. And the true inside meaning of that never changes, no matter what it may assume as an outward form.

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Last night I quarreled with you about that, and you denied it, Mr. Lawrence. Today, tomorrow, forever, I shall continue to affirm it—and you continue to deny, presumably. Thus, by our quarreling, we shall prove each other's theories—but mine most of all. For, while in every man is the aristocrat that you claim for a few, and in every man the democrat that I claim for the many, there is none who is not fundamentally Man.

Wizard of the forgotten magic, I say to you (I who am, according to you, impertinent with the conceit of youth,—and who, therefore, take advantage of the character you have given me, and dare to live up to it): If ever you can go beneath your British swagger, your false outside casing of superiority, and identify yourself with the lowest, the worst, the humblest men as you have identified yourself with figs, with peaches, with hibiscus blossoms,—if ever you go under that false external cover of your own heart to identify yourself with the best and highest men intimately, intuitively, and unconsciously, as you have succeeded in turning your inner light into blue jays, he-goats, and elephants, in a sympathetic and true identification,—that will be the word the world is waiting for, to help it out of its confused democracy and its abominable aristocracy, into its true, eventual resolution—humanity.



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# The Plumed Serpent

By Mabel Dodge Luhan

*" . . . . . between two worlds; one dead, the other powerless to be born."—Matthew Arnold.*

People read D. H. Lawrence's books and from them they form their opinion of the man who wrote them. But they do not generally recognize that an artist is not making a portrait of himself in his work. No matter how hard he may try to picture himself as he is, he is usually creating himself as he is not, projecting his deep wish for perfection, rounding himself out, completing himself in his work.

Take Cezanne, for instance, as an example of this creative instinct for self-production. Nowhere in modern painting do we find such form, such stability, such a sense of structure as in his paintings. He labored and sweated blood to realize the solidity of his forms. The delicate tones of his pigment represent to our vision real ponderable values. We can feel the weight of the objects he represents, we can touch and handle the apples, the vases and the flowers. And the earth he has painted has depth that reaches to China, while the houses have the textures of stone, plaster and wood as they rest heavily and solidly on the ground. In other words, Cezanne has realized form and structure in his work.

But the man himself? Did his life have form, character, structure? No, we know that Cezanne in his own nature was weak, vacillating, and shapeless. He had none of that responsible weightiness in his character that, when we see it, makes us exclaim: "There is a real man." He only achieved in his painting the dignity and the harmony that come from a true sense of form. He created for himself in paint the qualities that he felt were lacking in his nature. In this way, one may say, he attempted to complete himself.

All true artists are thus engaged in filling themselves out, and what they produce in doing so we call art. Real art has the man in it, the spirit, the wish, and the courage that spin out of himself those qualities he needs to satisfy the discontent in



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him, and the artist is the greatest of us all in these divine athletics of self-creation.

We remember the philosopher who was searching in the dark room for the black cat that was not there; and the mystic who went into the room and saw the cat! But it remains for the artist to go into the room and come out with the cat!

D. H. Lawrence is an artist who, in his work, is like one of those salmon upon whom he commented in one of his articles. He is swimming upstream against the current and nearing, each year, closer to the source. As he strains upward, the phenomena in the downward flowing streams of life flash past him and beckon him to give up his painful journey, but he rejects fiercely everything on both sides. He doesn't find many to companion him as he works himself along in the swift waters, for there are few real enemies of inertia.

The burden of genius is the heaviest one a man has to carry. No other yoke is so hard to bear. Yet our destiny is to bear gods and the genius of our race seeks to embody divinity in the feeble flesh of men. How many of us realize or understand the anguish and the travail that breaks these artists? Can their lives be measured by the squares and their actions balanced in the scales that so neatly reveal the small dimensions of lesser individuals? Never. They are forever outside the usual conformities; they are subject to inner daemons that use them for the vast enterprises of a spiritual universe not even dreamed of by most of us.

Lawrence's books contain the substantial representations of a dying world that he himself furiously rejects. That imperfection and limitation implicit in all men and in himself as well, he shows up and with loathing he rejects it. He destroys as he goes. His touch upon decaying matter is the last, swift, sweeping break-up of dissolution, consigning all these outworn forms and modes of our behaviour to dust and oblivion. In him is the fire that devours the rubbish, in him is the wind that scatters the ashes.

People, when they read his books, feel the passionate spirit in those pages, but they seldom realize, perhaps, that the living



*"... like the Morning Star*

*from an old Sculpture*

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flame in them catches at their own faded lives and with nimble subtlety starts the little fire that will consume their dry-rot. They cannot be touched by Lawrence's spirit as it flares at them and come out of that contact unscathed. For your organism and mine, and for his own, he has a wily contempt; and for the surface of the world; for our society, our methods, and the foolish aims and foibles of our whole sorry scheme! He would burn it all to the ground in the hope that a new flower might come up from the root.

But the way of the destroyer is hard. There are many dangers lying in wait, ready, self-protectively, to overcome the flaming swords of genius. To tell the truth the world *hates* genius—and will always hate it, for genius is the living and lively revelation of the world's errors and failures, and we all love to abide by our mistakes.

Lawrence is a difficult person to write about. It would be comparatively simple to write of him as a "writer," or to "study" him as a man, but it would be hard to get the truth of him that way. I do not think anyone will ever get this one down pat. Can the behaviorists sum up this D. H. Lawrence by an observation of his acts? I do not think so. His outward life is simple and natural. He gets up early in the morning, lights the kitchen fire, makes breakfast for himself and his wife. Then, like many another, he does chores about the place. He cuts wood; he cleans ditches. He reads and he writes and he pays his bills. He washes his shirts when they need it. He quarrels, he grumbles, he laughs, and he does this one and that a good turn. He bakes bread if he needs bread. He bakes it for his neighbor if his neighbor needs it. He is hot-tempered and good-natured, loyal and disloyal, he is this and that . . .

But all this is merely the story of this and that—of his mortal frailty, his organic mechanism. But Lawrence himself is more than this and that—and yearly he increases. What he is, essentially, no one knows. It is doubtful if he knows himself.



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But he is a man who has written :

"I am the Son of the Morning Star, and child of the deeps.  
No man knows my Father, and I know Him not.  
My Father is deep within the deeps, whence He sent me  
forth.

He sends the eagle of silence down on wide wings  
To lean over my head and my neck and my breast  
And fill them strong with the strength of wings.  
He sends the serpent of power up my feet and my loins  
So that strength wells up in me like water in hot springs.  
But midmost shines as the Morning Star midmost shines  
Between night and day, my Soul-star in one,  
Which is my Father whom I know not.  
I tell you, the day should not turn deep,  
Save for the morning and evening stars, upon which they  
turn.

Night turns upon me, and Day, who am the star between.  
Between your breast and belly is a star.

If it be not there

You are empty gourd-shells filled with dust and wind.

When you walk, the star walks with you, between your  
breast and your belly.

When you sleep, it softly shines.

When you speak true and true, it is bright on your lips and  
your teeth.

When you lift your hands in courage and bravery, its glow  
is clear in your palms.

When you turn to your wives as brave men turn to their  
women

The Morning Star and the Evening Star shine together.

For man is the Morning Star.

And woman is the Star of Evening.

I tell you, you are not men alone.

The star of the beyond is within you."

For Lawrence the word emancipation means deliverance.  
It means that somehow men and women shall deliver them-  
selves from the doom of perpetual organic repetition, and no

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longer be under the necessity of reaction and reflex. For self-will, which is merely of the nature of the beast, he would substitute free-will, which is deliverance from it.

Someone said earnestly the other day: "Strictly speaking, we are worms." And Lawrence, with unending ferocity, rejects this limited worm-like mechanism of man that, left to itself, turns in a circle and devours its own tail. In himself and in his neighbors he despises the automatic reactions of mere organism. His apparent disloyalty to men is his rejection of the machinery of man—of the egotistic robot that is known as the finest flower of evolution.

Everything that natural evolution has been able to produce is not enough for Lawrence. He spits on it. In himself and in the rest of mankind he sees persisting the old Adam of the heart, mind and the instincts that is so out-worn, so demode and that must put off, at last, the body of this death, lest this humanity spin itself out in a stale repetition of organic imperatives. The yogi, the saint, the ascetic alike, are no better, for him, than the harlot or the acrobat, since each only continues a circular movement of some special centre in this same mechanism that nature has brought to pass.

"Not *that* nor *that* nor merely more of *that*," he seems to cry, "But a change, a birth of something altogether new; the real 'substance' of things hoped for. No further flowering of *this*, no added beauty, nor nobler gesture of *this*—there's been enough, ad nauseum. . ."

And he rejects it all—and us all—and himself, too; and will have no more of these subtleties and varieties of our seemingly versatile but all too final human behavior.

"He had to meet them on another plane, where the contact was different; intangible, remote, and without *intimacy*. His soul was concerned elsewhere. So that the quick of him need not be bound to anybody. The quick of a man must turn to God alone: in some way or other.

"With Cipriano he was most sure. Cipriano and he, even when they embraced each other with passion, when they met

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after an absence, embraced in the recognition of each other's eternal and abiding loneliness; like the Morning Star. . .

"Men and women should know that they cannot, absolutely, meet on earth. In the closest kiss, the deepest touch, there is the small gulf which is none the less complete because it is so narrow, so *nearly* non-existent. They must bow and submit in reverence, to the gulf. Even though I eat the body and drink the blood of Christ, Christ is Christ and I am I, and the gulf is impassable. Though a woman be dearer to a man than his own life, yet he is he and she is she, and the gulf can never close up. Any attempt to close it is a violation, and the crime against the Holy Ghost.

"That which we get from the beyond, we get it alone. The final me I am, comes from the farthest off, from the Morning Star. The rest is assembled. All that of me which is assembled from the mighty cosmos can meet and touch all that is assembled in the beloved. But this is never the quick. Never can be.

"If we would meet in the quick, we must give up the assembled self, the daily I, and putting off ourselves one after the other, meet unconscious in the Morning Star. Body, soul and spirit can be transfigured into the Morning Star. But without transfiguration we shall never get there. We shall gnash at the leash.

We call him disloyal because we are self-satisfied and he is not. We find his refusal to shut his eyes upon the fact of our limitations to be a kind of going back on his gang. "He has," we tell each other, "no esprit de corps." No, indeed, he has no longer any esprit de corps—for things as they are. He waits for the new substance of things hoped for, he waits for the new mode. But even if his waiting be all in vain, he will not capitulate, in weariness, to the old modes, for he cannot if he would.

Something seeks to come to pass in him:

"For this, the only thing which is supreme above all power in a man, and at the same time is power; which far transcends knowledge; the strange Star. . . ."



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## Animals and Ideas

by Walter Wigginton

A political essay in six parts has, obviously, nothing to do with reflections on the death of a porcupine—until you know what D. H. Lawrence's reflections are on the death of a porcupine. But even then it is somehow unfair that "The Crown" should be the *pièce de resistance* in a book so titled.\*

Here we have two books masquerading under a gay colored dress as one. The first was written in England during the war; the second in New Mexico during the summer. And, frankly, I am only interested in the latter. The other is, to me, dull.

In fact, one can almost use that purely feminine method of not reading those essays uninterestingly titled: The Crown (one, two, three, four, five, six), Blessed are the Powerful, and Aristocracy; and choosing the more vivid headlines: Love was Once a Little Boy, Him with his Tail in his Mouth, and the Porcupine itself.

In this last group, Susan, the Cow, stalks through the pages like the consort of a mystic Egyptian Bull; and a white cock, a red hen, and a dandelion are the principal characters. You can hear the wind in the pines, and Madame is a real person.

And in these, there is that earthy, observant, alive Lawrence that lives in all three centers; in the other essays, there is only a nervous mind whirling in mechanical revolutions.

This may be an unfair distinction, a purely personal distinction between what interests me and what does not. But I think it is more than that. I do not object to having an author's ideas on life or politics or art—but Lawrence, at least, can convey those ideas much more brilliantly and effectively in a description of a moonlight adventure with a porcupine or a sunlight adventure with a dandelion than he can in all the old jargon about Mortality, Time, God, Death, The Source, The Dove, and Eternity. (The capitals are his.)

That is why his novels are more significant than such books as *Fantasia of the Unconscious* and why *Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine* is more important than *The Crown*, despite its occupancy of half the book—and the first half at that.

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\**Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine*, by D. H. Lawrence: The Centaur Press, Philadelphia, 1925: \$3.



*Mount Lobo (linoleum)*

*by Loren Mozley*



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